

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A plane diffraction grating with grooves formed on a surface thereof, the plane diffraction grating being rotated about a rotational axis which is normal to the surface, and
5 being characterized in that a profile of the grooves at a radial area is determined depending on a rotational position of the area about a rotational center defined as a foot of the rotational axis on the surface of the plane diffraction grating.

2. The plane diffraction grating according to claim 1, wherein the plane diffraction
10 grating is a blazed type, and a blaze angle θ_0 of the grooves in an area along an original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ is set as:

$$\theta_0 = \frac{\alpha + \beta}{2},$$

where α is an angle of an incident ray from a normal to the surface of the plane diffraction grating in the area, and β is an angle of a diffraction ray from the normal, and
15 a blaze angle θ_ϕ of the grooves in an area along a line at the rotational position ϕ is set as

$$\sin \theta_\phi = \sin \theta_0 \sqrt{\frac{1 + \tan^2 \phi}{1 + \tan^2 \phi \sin^2 \theta_0}}.$$

3. The plane diffraction grating according to claim 2, wherein:
20 the surface of the plane diffraction grating is covered with a multiple-layer coating to improve reflectivity;

an unit thickness d_{b0} of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda_0 = 2d_{b0} R_{a0} \cos(\alpha - \theta_0),$$

where

m_b is the diffraction order,

λ_0 is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area,

$$5 \quad R_{a0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \alpha},$$

$$\delta = 1 - n,$$

n is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating,

and an unit thickness $d_{b\phi}$ of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the line at the

10 rotational position ϕ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda = 2d_{b\phi} R_{a\phi} \cos(\alpha - \theta_n),$$

where

λ is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area

$$R_{a\phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \alpha},$$

$$15 \quad \delta_\phi = 1 - n_\phi,$$

n_ϕ is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating.

4. The plane diffraction grating according to claim 1, wherein the plane diffraction grating is a laminar type, and a depth h_0 of the grooves in an area along an original line at

20 the rotational position $\phi = 0$ is set as

$$h_0 = \frac{\lambda_0}{2(\cos \alpha + \cos \beta)},$$

where λ_0 is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area, α is an angle of an incident ray from a normal to the surface of the plane diffraction grating in the area, and β is an angle of a diffraction ray from the normal, and

a depth h_ϕ of the grooves in an area along a line at the rotational position ϕ is

5 set as

$$h_\phi = \frac{\lambda_0}{2(\cos \alpha + \cos \beta) \cos \phi}.$$

5. The plane diffraction grating according to claim 4, wherein:

the surface of the plane diffraction grating is covered with a multiple-layer coating

10 to improve reflectivity;

an unit thickness d_{b0} of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the original

line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda_0 = d_{b0} (R_{\alpha 0} \sin \alpha + R_{\beta 0} \sin \beta),$$

where

15 m_b is the diffraction order,

$$R_{\alpha 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \alpha}, \quad R_{\beta 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \beta},$$

$$\delta = 1 - n,$$

n is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating,

and

20 an unit thickness $d_{b\phi}$ of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the line at the

rotational position ϕ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda = d_{b\phi} (R_{\alpha\phi} \sin \alpha + R_{\beta\phi} \sin \beta),$$

where

λ is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area

$$R_{\alpha\phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \alpha}, \quad R_{\beta\phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \beta},$$

$$\delta_\phi = 1 - n_\phi,$$

5 n_ϕ is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating.

6. An optical system comprising:

a plane diffraction grating having grooves on a surface of the plane diffraction grating whose profile at an area is determined depending on a rotational position of the

10 area about a rotational center defined as a foot of the rotational axis defined below;

a mechanism for rotating the plane diffraction grating about a rotational axis which is normal to the surface;

an incidence optical system for casting a converging beam of light on a point of the surface of the plane diffraction grating, the point being apart from the rotational center.

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7. The optical system according to claim 6, wherein the plane diffraction grating is a blazed type, and a blaze angle θ_0 of the grooves in an area along an original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ is set as:

$$\theta_0 = \frac{\alpha + \beta}{2},$$

20 where α is an angle of an incident ray from a normal to the surface of the plane diffraction grating in the area, and β is an angle of a diffraction ray from the normal, and

a blaze angle θ_ϕ of the grooves in an area along a line at the rotational position

ϕ is set as:

$$\sin \theta_{\phi} = \sin \theta_0 \sqrt{\frac{1 + \tan^2 \phi}{1 + \tan^2 \phi \sin^2 \theta_0}}.$$

8. The optical system according to claim 7, wherein:

the surface of the plane diffraction grating is covered with a multiple-layer coating

5 to improve reflectivity;

an unit thickness d_{b0} of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the original

line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda_0 = 2d_{b0} R_{\alpha 0} \cos(\alpha - \theta_0),$$

where

10 m_b is the diffraction order,

λ_0 is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area,

$$R_{\alpha 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \alpha},$$

$$\delta = 1 - n,$$

n is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating,

15 and

an unit thickness $d_{b\phi}$ of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the line at the

rotational position ϕ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda = 2d_{b\phi} R_{\alpha \phi} \cos(\alpha - \theta_0),$$

where

20 λ is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area

$$R_{\alpha \phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_{\phi} - \delta_{\phi}^2) / \cos^2 \alpha},$$

$$\delta_{\phi} = 1 - n_{\phi},$$

n_ϕ is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating.

9. The optical system according to claim 6, wherein the plane diffraction grating is a laminar type, and a depth h_0 of the grooves in an area along an original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ is set as

$$h_0 = \frac{\lambda_0}{2(\cos \alpha + \cos \beta)},$$

- where λ_0 is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area, α is an angle of an incident ray from a normal to the surface of the plane diffraction grating in the area, and β is an angle of a diffraction ray from the normal, and

a depth h_ϕ of the grooves in an area along a line at the rotational position ϕ is set as

$$h_\phi = \frac{\lambda_0}{2(\cos \alpha + \cos \beta) \cos \phi}.$$

10. The optical system according to claim 9, wherein:
the surface of the plane diffraction grating is covered with a multiple-layer coating to improve reflectivity;
an unit thickness d_{b0} of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda_0 = d_{b0} (R_{\alpha 0} \sin \alpha + R_{\beta 0} \sin \beta),$$

where

m_b is the diffraction order,

$$R_{\alpha 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \alpha}, \quad R_{\beta 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \beta},$$

$$\delta = 1 - n,$$

n is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating,

and

- 5 an unit thickness $d_{b\phi}$ of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the line at the rotational position ϕ satisfies the equation:

$$m\lambda = d_{b\phi} (R_{\alpha\phi} \sin \alpha + R_{\beta\phi} \sin \beta),$$

where

λ is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area,

$$10 \quad R_{\alpha\phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \alpha}, \quad R_{\beta\phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \beta},$$

$$\delta_\phi = 1 - n_\phi,$$

n_ϕ is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating.

11. A method of producing a plane diffraction grating having grooves on a surface thereof whose profile at an area is determined depending on a rotational position of the area about a rotational center, the method comprising the steps of:

coating a substrate with a photo-resist layer and forming a photo-resist mask from the photo-resist layer according to a preset pattern of groove arrangement;

- 20 covering the photo-resist mask with a sector mask having an opening of a narrow sector whose apex is set at the rotational center;

etching the substrate over the sector mask with an appropriate etching condition depending on a rotational position of the sector mask about the rotational center;

rotating the sector mask by an angle of the apex of the narrow sector; and

repeating the etching process and the mask rotating process until the narrow sector sweeps the surface of the substrate.

12. The plane diffraction grating producing method according to claim 11, wherein
5 the plane diffraction grating is a blazed type, and the etching condition in the etching process is such that:

a blaze angle θ_0 of the grooves in an area along an original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ is set as

$$\theta_0 = \frac{\alpha + \beta}{2},$$

10 where α is an angle of an incident ray from a normal to the surface of the plane diffraction grating in the area, and β is an angle of a diffraction ray from the normal, and

a blaze angle θ_ϕ of the grooves in an area along a line at the rotational position ϕ is set as

$$\sin \theta_\phi = \sin \theta_0 \sqrt{\frac{1 + \tan^2 \phi}{1 + \tan^2 \phi \sin^2 \theta_0}}.$$

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13. The plane diffraction grating producing method according to claim 12, wherein the surface of the plane diffraction grating is then covered with a multiple-layer coating to improve reflectivity, and:

an unit thickness d_{b0} of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the original
20 line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda_0 = 2d_{b0} R_{\alpha 0} \cos(\alpha - \theta_0),$$

where

m_b is the diffraction order,

λ_0 is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area,

$$R_{\alpha 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \alpha},$$

$$\delta = 1 - n,$$

5 n is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating,

and

an unit thickness $d_{b\phi}$ of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the line at the rotational position ϕ satisfies the equation:

$$m_b \lambda = 2d_{b\phi} R_{\alpha\phi} \cos(\alpha - \theta_0),$$

10 where

λ is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area

$$R_{\alpha\phi} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \alpha},$$

$$\delta_\phi = 1 - n_\phi,$$

n_ϕ is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating.

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14. The plane diffraction grating producing method according to claim 11, wherein the plane diffraction grating is a laminar type, and the etching condition in the etching process is such that:

a depth h_0 of the grooves in an area along an original line at the rotational position

20 $\phi = 0$ is set as

$$h_0 = \frac{\lambda_0}{2(\cos \alpha + \cos \beta)},$$

where λ_0 is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area, α is an angle of an incident ray from a normal to the surface of the plane diffraction grating in the area, and β is an angle of a diffraction ray from the normal, and

a depth h_ϕ of the grooves in an area along a line at the rotational position ϕ is set

5 as

$$h_\phi = \frac{\lambda_0}{2(\cos \alpha + \cos \beta) \cos \phi}.$$

15. The plane diffraction grating producing method according to claim 4, wherein the surface of the plane diffraction grating is then covered with a multiple-layer coating to improve reflectivity, and:

an unit thickness d_{b0} of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the original line at the rotational position $\phi = 0$ satisfies the equation

$$m_b \lambda_0 = d_{b0} (R_{\alpha 0} \sin \alpha + R_{\beta 0} \sin \beta),$$

where

16 m_b is the diffraction order,

$$R_{\alpha 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \alpha}, \quad R_{\beta 0} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta - \delta^2) / \cos^2 \beta},$$

$$\delta = 1 - n,$$

where n is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating,

and

20 an unit thickness $d_{b\phi}$ of the multiple-layer coating in the area along the line at the rotational position ϕ satisfies the equation

$$m_b \lambda_\phi = d_{b\phi} (R_{\alpha\phi} \sin \alpha + R_{\beta\phi} \sin \beta),$$

where

λ is the wavelength of the light diffracted by the area

$$R_{\alpha\beta} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \alpha}, \quad R_{\beta\beta} = \sqrt{1 - (2\delta_\phi - \delta_\phi^2) / \cos^2 \beta},$$

where $\delta_\phi = 1 - n_\phi$ and

5 n_ϕ is the average refractive index of the multiple-layer coating.